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# BANNERS

BY BABETTE DEUTSCH

(" The national colors, with their eagles, have given place to plain red flags, one of which floats over the famous Winter Palace, where the Duma will now meet."—Newspaper clipping.)

When on the sun-spawned earth  
First the mothering light  
Dawned on her dark,  
What stirred in the dark?  
The brute was groping there,  
Lured from his rock-hewn home  
By the beckoning spark.  
A slow, earth-smattered thing,  
With the smell of the earth on his hair,—  
His, in the dawn of the world,  
His, in a cave impearled,  
His was the first great spring  
To the red dawn, to the fire.  
The caves are buried.  
The mammoth-hunter  
Is dust upon the dust he trod.  
Yet here upon a richer sod  
The serf of later ages, burnt with toil,  
Stood free,  
And saw the fruits of his own soil  
Glowing like dawn.  
And here the cities see  
Among their clustering lights and smoke, new days,  
New freedoms and new slavery.  
But now, as from beneath the deep earth-floor  
The seed of flame beats upward, raging higher,  
Now breaks the noise of people roused to war,  
Who take their own like fire.

Their flag is fire:  
Color of the red sun  
On the horizon of the cave-man; one  
With the color that is spilled over the earth  
In every battle, in every shuddering birth.  
Blood of the beaten slave, of the faithful crucified,  
Blood sapped from the worker, blood of all who died  
To nourish the new soil wherefrom should spring  
The unknown desired thing.  
This flag a nation takes, to stud  
The battle-fields with beauty.  
Oh when you behold it whipping in the wind,  
Color of dawn and of your own heart's blood,  
Soldiers,  
Will you not rise  
From earth-trench and sea-hollow where you keep  
Your tryst with death,  
And wake out of your sleep,  
And see with the cave-man's eyes  
That the day is here, and this is the sunrise!  
Come, as the brute from the dark, with a mighty leap  
To the red dawn, to the light.

BABETTE DEUTSCH.